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NPIC/IEG (8/83)  
2 AUGUST 1983

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FIRST IDENTIFICATION OF FIXED WING AIRCRAFT  
MATAN AS SARRA AIRFIELD, LIBYA (SWN)

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1. SIGNIFICANCE: THREE SF.260 AIRCRAFT WERE IDENTIFIED AT MATAN AS SARRA AIRFIELD IN SOUTHEASTERN LIBYA. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME FIXED WING AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN OBSERVED AT THIS AIRFIELD AND THEY MAY HAVE UTILIZED A NEWLY DEMARCATED, GRADED-EARTH LANDING STRIP. (SWN)

2. REMARKS: ON IMAGERY OF [ ] ONE SF.260 WAS PARKED AT THE SOUTH END OF THE EASTERN PARALLEL RUNWAY AND TWO SF.260 WERE PARKED ON A GRADED-EARTH PARKING APRON NEAR THE CENTER OF THE WESTERN PARALLEL RUNWAY. IN THE PAST, THE ONLY AIR ACTIVITY OBSERVED IN THE AREA HAD BEEN HELICOPTERS AT A LANDING PAD AT MAATEN ES SARRA MILITARY CAMP [ ], 1 NM SOUTHEAST OF THE AIRFIELD. THE NEWLY DEMARCATED RUNWAY, AT LEAST 1,000 METERS IN LENGTH, WITH TOUCHDOWN POINTS AND CENTERLINE WAS NOT PRESENT ON [ ] MATAN AS SARRA AIRFIELD HAS BEEN UNDER CONSTRUCTION SINCE EARLY 1980. (SWN)

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ANALYST'S COMMENTS -- DURING 1981 AND 1982, ALTHOUGH NO AIRCRAFT WERE HERE, A SMALL SECTION OF THE GRADED-EARTH EAST RUNWAY WAS CONSIDERED OPERATIONAL FOR SMALL, LIGHT AIRCRAFT AND HELICOPTERS. IN EARLY 1983, THE OPERATIONAL PORTION OF THE RUNWAY WAS GRADED OVER AND THE MAJORITY OF THE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY SHIFTED TO THE WEST PARALLEL RUNWAY. A PROBABLE HARDENED SURFACE HAD BEEN LAID ON THE SOUTH 2,000 METERS OF THE WESTERN PARALLEL RUNWAY. THE INTRODUCTION OF AN OPERATIONAL LANDING STRIP FOR LIGHT STRIKE AIRCRAFT AT MATAN AS SARRA PROVIDES THE LIBYAN'S WITH A STAGING BASE INSIDE LIBYA IN THE EVENT HABRE'S FORCES THREATEN AOZOU AIRFIELD [ ]. THE SF.260 HAS AN OPERATIONAL RADIUS OF 300 NM. FROM MATAN AS SARRA, THE SF.260 CAN STRIKE THE FAYA LARGEAU, THE BARDAI, AND THE AOZOU AREAS OF CHAD. (SWN)

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MATAN AS SARRA AIRFIELD IS IN SOUTHEASTERN LIBYA, 172 NM SOUTH OF KUFRA AND 275 NORTHEAST OF FAYA LARGEAU, CHAD. (SWN) [ ]

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3. [ ] COORDINATES 21-41-25N 021-49-56E (S)

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